Texas Instruments Personal Computer

April 1982, No. 4

User's Newsletter

Newest Software Packages from TI

Texas Instruments now adds two more software packages to the growing list of applications programs available for use with the TI-99/4 and TI-99/4A Home Computers.

Reading Roundup

Knowing how to read — with comprehension and speed—is integral to a child becoming a successful student. The Reading Roundup *Solid State Software*™ Command Module has been carefully designed to help your child improve his or her knowledge of figures of speech, word meanings, and idioms. The subject matter in the module corresponds to material traditionally covered in grades 3 through 5.

The Command Module was developed by TI in conjunction with Scott, Foresman and Company, a leading educational publisher. It contains four colorfully depicted stories and three practice drills. Three of the four stories concentrate on one reading skill each, in a format entitled Study It. The fourth story employs all three skills: utilizing figures of speech, identifying word meanings, and understanding idioms. Each of the reading skills is also reinforced with short drills in a format called Try It Out.

All stories and drills are designed to allow your child to feel like an active participant, not only through the use of questions and answers, but also by visual and musical reinforcement when the right answer is chosen. In addition, your child is asked to give a name to the principal character in four of the activities.

With this module, Texas Instruments continues its tradition of applying *Solid State Speech*™ technology to educational activities. Reading Roundup is designed to work with or without the Texas Instruments *Solid State Speech*™ Synthesizer. With the Speech Synthesizer attached, the voice of the computer reinforces the learning experience.

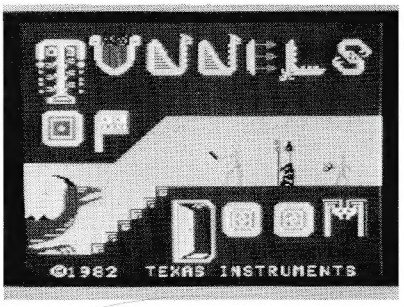
The Reading Roundup Command Module increases your child's reading skills through the understanding of figures of speech, word meanings, and idioms in material corresponding to grades 3 through 5.

The Reading Roundup module continuously challenges your child to make decisions that are followed with appropriate rewards, corrections, and learning aids, thereby creating an environment conducive to a positive learning situation. The Command Module (model number PHM 3047) has a suggested retail price of $54.95.

Tunnels of Doom

Now you can be the lone hero or the leader of a party of adventurers fighting countless monsters and overcoming grave dangers in a quest to rescue the king and gather great treasures. The Tunnels of Doom *Solid State Software*™ Command Module is a role-playing adventure that stimulates your imagination and challenges your survival instincts. You are not just a spectator but an active member of a rescue party. You are in control of what happens to your players, and eventually, you become the character journeying through the Tunnels of Doom. No matter what the circumstances may be, you must gather all your strength and wits to survive.

To play Tunnels of Doom, you need both the Tunnels of Doom Command Module and a cassette- or diskette-based Tunnels of Doom game. The module contains the general program instructions which are customized by the particular cassette tape or diskette game you use with it. For your convenience, two games are included with this Command Module — *Quest of the King* and *Pennies and Prizes.*



The exciting new Tunnels of Doom Command Module lets you enter a world of fantasy where your instincts and imagination determine your chances of survival. The module comes with two games.

Tunnels of Doom (model number PHM 3042) will provide countless hours of challenge and fun as you journey through a world of limitless fantasy. The Command Module has a suggested retail price of $59.95. The diskette version requires the TI Disk Memory System (TI Disk Drive Controller and TI Disk Memory Drive), while the cassette-based version requires a cassette recorder and TI Cassette Interface Cable — all sold separately.

Addition & Subtraction, an educational package

By Lawrence R. DeRusha, Jr.

Editor's Note: The following article was reprinted from the February 8, 1982, issue of *InfoWorld* with permission from Popular Computing/Inc., a subsidiary of C W Communications/Inc.

Many educational institutions and companies are exploring ways in which the personal computer can aid in educating grade-school children. Scott, Foresman and Company, an educational-textbook publisher, is developing an educational series of programs in conjunction with the Texas Instruments Learning Center. Addition and Subtraction 1, authored by Thomas Hartsig, is part of this series and is produced as one of the snap-in Solid State Modules from TI.

Features

You require only the console for operating this program module. You can, in addition, use speech with an optional speech synthesizer attached to the console.

The program begins with an animated rocket ship blasting off. It is followed by a main-index listing. The colorful rocket introduces each selected activity with a banner and sound effects. You can select nine activities:

- Counting Bars;
- Getting Ready;
- Addition Action;
- Add Another Way;
- Subtraction Action;
- Subtract Another Way;
- Across and Down;
- Addition Table; and
- Subtraction Table.

The level of difficulty to which you will advance depends on how many correct responses you make. Each individually correct answer is rewarded with a musical tune and a happy face, or a gold star. Incorrect answers are indicated by a red X across the answer, and you are asked to try again. If you miss more than 60% of the answers in an activity, the program will return you to the previous activity.

Each activity begins with a tutorial. In the first tutorial for Counting Bars, you are taken through the illustration of counting individual colored bars. The drill that follows asks you to identify the number of bars in various pictures, randomly selected by the computer. If you make more than two wrong guesses, the computer shows you the right answer by counting step-by-step.

In the second activity, Getting Ready, the demonstration displays two boxes of objects. Each object is counted with an animated display followed by the written number for the number of objects in the box. After several examples, the drill begins. The exercise asks you to answer questions that reinforce the counting skills of the first activity.

The third activity illustrates the "bringing-together" concept of adding. The screen displays two boxes with objects in them. The objects, perhaps rabbits, on the right move into the box on the left. The problem, given in a word sentence, follows.

The concept of vertical addition is the topic of the fourth activity, which is entitled Add Another Way. Vertical problems are made from horizontal ones. In the drill, you are asked to answer the vertical problems.

The fifth selection on the index, Subtraction Action, utilizes a box for the activity area also. Objects are used to illustrate the "moving away" principle of subtraction by their movement out of the box. This is followed by a word sentence indicating the problem.

Section six shows you vertical subtraction.

Activity seven applies the principle of vertical and horizontal addition and subtraction by using a box divided into nine sections.

The last two activities use a game for practicing addition and subtraction. In the first game a table appears with numbers to be manipulated horizontally across the top and vertically down the left side. In the last section a table shows numbers down the left side and the program randomly picks a number to be added or subtracted from that number.

Performance

Each activity was well designed and effectively accomplished its goals with appealing interest.

The computer asks you to respond by saying or displaying the words *your turn.* If you do not replay within ten seconds, the computer will beep and ask again. If you still do not answer after the third time, the computer will ask, "What is the number?" A tutorial is provided if you do not reply after the third try.

If your answer is incorrect twice during the first seven activities, the computer will work the problem out step-by-step. At the end of the last two activities the computer provides you with a list of problems to study.

I found it annoying that I could not return to the main menu at any time. To depress the shift and back keys will take you to the start of the activity you are in. No access is provided to go back to the main menu, however.

This Texas Instruments Solid State Module is enhanced by animation, music and sound effects.

Ease of use

The Addition and Subtraction 1 module is easy to use. Just plug the module into the slot on the console and begin. If you are utilizing the speech unit, it should be plugged into the outlet on the side of the computer before you begin.

A flashing cursor indicates a response is required. If you are using speech, it also asks for a response.

The master menu allows you to select any of the activities in the program. You can only choose at the beginning of the program, however.

Editor's Note: If you press BEGIN while the cursor is flashing, you can return to the Addition and Subtraction 1 selection list.

Error handling

The Addition and Subtraction 1 module appears to be immune to users' punishment and users' errors.

The manual for this module is good. There is a Quick Reference Guide that summarizes keyboard functions on the console. Adults working with children on the module are addressed in a separate segment about using the module.

There is a section titled "Your Child and The Computer" that indicates precautions to take around the computer.

The Special Features section and the summaries of the various activities are short but effective.

Summary

This program is well done. It provides serious lessons yet has entertainment value to prevent boredom. I think it should be included in any educational-software library.

InfoWorld
Software Report Card

Addition and Subtraction 1	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Performance	☐	☐	☐	☑
Documentation	☐	☐	☐	☑
Ease of Use	☐	☐	☐	☑
Error Handling	☐	☐	☐	☑

System Requirements

- **TI-99/4 or TI-99/4A**
- **Speech synthesizer optional**

Price $39.95

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Lubbock, TX 79408

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The Personal Computer User's Newsletter is published by the Texas Instruments Personal Computer Division, P. O. Box 53, Lubbock, Texas 79408. All correspondence concerning this newsletter should be mailed to the above address.

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The New TI Learning Center Now Open

When Texas Instruments opened the doors to its new Learning Center in the Chicago Merchandise Mart on January 18, 1982, it inaugurated an innovative approach to understanding today's technology. The Learning Center offers numerous demonstrations and workshops so that the consumer has an opportunity to learn about computers, calculators, learning aids, and other electronic products before he or she buys. The primary focus of Learning Center activity is within the community itself. Although the site at the Merchandise Mart serves as the base of operations, most of the workshops are held at schools, libraries, and locations throughout the city and its surrounding area. By reaching out to the whole community, the Learning Center enables its courses to be available to as many people as possible. Participants are charged a nominal fee for each session which lasts several hours.

Three of the most popular workshops offered are *How You Can Use a Home Computer; TI LOGO: A Computer Language for Children;* and *An Introduction to Programming: Beginner's BASIC. How You Can Use a Home Computer* answers questions and explains home computers in a language everyone can understand. It describes the equipment and accessories associated with the computer and how they can best be used. *TI LOGO: A Computer Language for Children* is designed to introduce parents and teachers to TI LOGO and show how it can be used to educate children. TI LOGO is a computer language developed by Texas Instruments in conjunction with the staff of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. *An Introduction to Programming: Beginner's BASIC* teaches computer novices the fundamentals of programming in TI BASIC.

One of the first people to try out the TI Home Computer at the new Chicago Learning Center was Illinois Governor James Thompson. Here he is shown during Opening Day ceremonies.

"Response to the Learning Center concept and the courses has been excellent," relates Theresa Cloer, TI Learning Center Operations Manager. "In March there were five sessions on Home Computers and five on TI LOGO. Two were originally scheduled for *Introduction to Programming BASIC,* but due to demand, a third session was added. In fact, over 400 people are waiting for these classes when they're held again!"

Courses are held weekdays, evenings, and weekends. Participants become so involved they're reluctant to take breaks. Often they're heard to comment "the course doesn't last long enough." One enthusiastic student recently wrote in a course evaluation, "three hours have never passed so quickly."

The Chicago Learning Center is a first for Texas Instruments. Not only is TI learning from the Center's operations, but it is thinking in terms of expanding the concept later this year. Ms. Cloer adds, "The Learning Center is designed to provide ongoing and local access to the information people need for a greater knowledge of the products of today's technology, and to teach them how to apply these products to their needs at home, in school, or on the job!"

Users' Groups Corner

The number of TI Users' Groups continues to increase with the addition of two more active groups in the United States. These Users' Groups and others around the world are exceedingly helpful to those interested in sharing technical information, keeping up-to-date on new hardware and software, and exchanging thoughts and ideas.

The new Users' Groups are:

Missouri

99/4 Users' Group of St. Louis
Mark Sumner
812 Keswick Place
St. Louis, MO 63119
(314) 962-8286

Texas

Amarillo 99/4 Users' Group
Ralph Quinones
P.O. Box 366
Canyon, TX 79015
(806) 655-4563

Anaheim Computer Show

The Anaheim Computer Show will be held May 7-9, 1982, at the Anaheim Convention Center. Among the vast array of computer technology on display will be the TI Home Computer, its accessories, and software.

This Users' Newsletter will attempt to keep you informed as to when and where forthcoming Computer Shows will be held.

Get Your FREE Subscription to the TEXNET℠ Information Service

Get your FREE subscription to the TEXNET Information Service — a $100 value — with the purchase of a Texas Instruments Telephone Coupler (Modem), RS-232 Interface unit (or RS-232 Interface Card*), and a Terminal Emulator II *Solid State Software*™ Command Module. This offer is valid at your local dealers from May 15 through August 15, 1982.

The TEXNET service can tie your TI Home Computer into a nationwide network of programs, communications and information. It can bring new interests, new convenience, and new knowledge to every member of your family. There's a truly remarkable range of more than 1,200 programs and services — with many special services designed specifically for TI Home Computer users. You can get free programs (and submit your own for consideration) through a TI program exchange. You can get the latest, updated TI software directory, plus product and technology news. There's a text-to-speech phonetic dictionary, music and graphics libraries, and more — all tailor-made for your TI Home Computer.

In addition, there is the immense variety offered by The Source℠ — news, sports, stocks, commodities, research, airline and hotel reservations, consumer information, entertainment, games, electronic mail, advanced programming languages, electronic shopping, and much more. It's all at your fingertips with a speed, facility, and immediacy possible only through a major computer network of this scope and diversity. Plus, The Source allows you to take advantage of such economical rates as less than 10¢ per minute on evenings and weekends.

Equipment needed to take full advantage of all the features of the TEXNET service include the Terminal Emulator II Command Module, a *Solid State Speech*™ Synthesizer, an RS-232 Interface unit (or RS-232 Interface Card*), and the TI Telephone Coupler (Modem).

To get your FREE subscription to the TEXNET Information Service, follow these three steps:

Step One: Keep your sales receipts from the purchase of a Texas Instruments Telephone Coupler (Modem), a Terminal Emulator II Command Module, and an RS-232 Interface unit (or an RS-232 Interface Card*). All three items must be purchased during the period from May 15 through August 15, 1982.

Step Two: Call 800-336-3366 (9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., EDT, Monday-Friday). Provide name, address, phone number, place of purchase, and number and expiration date of your American Express, Master Card, or VISA credit card. Monthly usage charges ($10 minimum) must be billed to one of these three cards.

Step Three: You will receive your User's Kit and contract direct from the TEXNET service via UPS. You may begin using the service immediately, but please return the signed contract and proof-of-purchase sales receipts promptly (service will be discontinued if not received in 10 days.)

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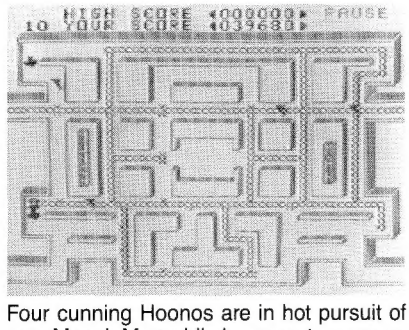
*Requires the TI Peripheral Expansion System.

A $100 Value FREE from May 15-August 15

HOME COMPUTER FREE SOFTWARE OFFER

Buy any four Texas Instruments *Solid State Software*™ Command Modules or one of the new Texas Instruments software albums (several software packages in a convenient storage binder) between February 1 and May 15, 1982, and we'll send you the exciting new Munch Man Command Module free! See your dealer today for order blanks and complete details.



Four cunning Hoonos are in hot pursuit of your Munch Man while he races to an energizer to change the attack. Determine the fate of the Munch Man with the exciting new Munch Man Command Module.

Texas Instruments invented the integrated circuit, the microprocessor, and the microcomputer. Being first is our tradition.